

Message Text

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47

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 AID-05 PC-05 FDRE-00 OC-05

CCO-00 SCSE-00 SCA-01 A-01 EB-07 COME-00 DOTE-00

FAA-00 FMC-02 /078 W

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FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2383

INFO USCINCSO

UNCLAS TEGUCIGALPA 0635

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJECT: FEBRUARY 4 RECONNAISSANCE NORTH COAST

REF: TEGUCIGALPA 0616 (DTG 042240Z FEB 76)

1. FEBRUARY 4 AMBASSADOR SANCHEZ, AID DIRECTOR KIMBALL AND
CONSUL HANCOCK ACCOMPANIED GENERAL PAZ GARCIA ON HIS
RECONNAISSANCE OF SAN PEDRO AND PUERTO CORTES.

2. LA MESA AIRPORT UNDAMAGED, EXCEPT ONE WAREHOUSE WALL
FLIGHTS CONTINUE UNINTERRUPTED. DAMAGES TO BANCO ATLANTIDA,
GRAN SULA HOTEL AND BANCO DE HONDURAS IN SAN PEDRO APPEARED MORE
COSMETIC THAN STRUCTURAL ALTHOUGH ENGINEERING INVESTIGATIONS WILL
BE REQUIRED TO CONFIRM THIS. NO DEATHS REPORTED AND THE FEW PERSONAL
INJURIES REPORTED HAVE BEEN GENERALLY ATTRIBUTED TO PANIC
RATHER THAN FALLING DEBRIS.

3. THE PORT FACILITIES AT PUERTO CORTES SUFFERED APPROXIMATE
FOUR INCH SETTLEMENT SUCH THAT THE PORTION OF WHARFS
CONSTRUCTED ON LAND (THE MAJORITY OF AREA) IS NOW LOWER
THAN THE PORTION CONSTRUCTED ON PILINGS. THIS HAS NOT
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AFFECTED OPERATIONS AS RAILROADS STILL USEABLE. LUMBER AND

BANANAS WERE BEING LOADED DURING OUR VISIT. TWO WAREHOUSES SUFFERED SLIGHT BUCKELING OF WALLS. WAREHOUSES WERE IN GENERAL DISORDER DUE TO TIPPING OVER OF MAJORITY OF RACKS USED TO STORE GOODS. CHIEF OF PORT AUTHORITY COELLO ESTIMATES LOSSES AT ABOUT 5 PERCENT OF GOODS STORED. COELLO STATED CONCERN OVER PHONE CALLS HE HAD BEEN RECEIVING FROM U.S. SHIPPERS WHO BELIEVED PORT NOW UNUSEABLE. COELLO ESTIMATED PORT WOULD BE BACK IN FULL OPERATION AFTER CLEAN UP BY TODAY. ESTIMATE APPEARS REASONABLE TO US.

4. TOWN OF PUERTO CORTES SUFFERED SOME DAMAGE TO HOUSING IN THE CAMPO ROJO ZONE WHICH IS GENERALLY COMPRISED OF OLDER WOODEN HOMES ON STILTS. NO DEATHS REPORT IN PUERTO CORTES.

5. COPEN (THE NATIONAL PERMANENT EMERGENCY COUNCIL) HAS PROMISED TO SHARE WITH US TOMORROW THEIR ASSESSMENT OF DAMAGES IN ALL OF HONDURAS.

6. TODAY USAID ENGINEER BRIDWELL IS INSPECTING SITUATION IN BORDER AREAS OF OCOTEPEQUE, SANTA ROSA DE COPAN AND SANTA BARBARA. WILL REPORT RESULTS TOMORROW.
SANCHEZ

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